

58-6682/6

7 SEP 1960

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Newton D. Fischer, M. D.
Department of Surgery
School of Medicine
University of North Carolina
Chapel Hill, North Carolina

Dear Dr. Fischer:

Congressman Durkin has brought to my attention your very thoughtful letter of August 22, in which you raise a number of questions with regard to the Powers trial.

As you can well appreciate, many of the points on which you ask comment are still in the classified field, and it would not be possible for me to write you about them. Furthermore, even though the trial itself is over, Powers is still a prisoner of the Soviet and we should be careful in our comments that we do nothing to make his own situation more difficult.

In addition, I would add that you take into account the fact that Powers was over a hundred days in solitary confinement without access to family, friends, his own legal advisers, or any U. S. Embassy representative prior to the trial, that undoubtedly the Soviets had dressed into his mind what they wished to come out at the trial, and that this can be done and be effective even short of the techniques of "brain washing" along the lines that have been reported extensively in the press and publications since the Korean War.

Also, I want you to know that in selecting the pilots for such difficult missions, no one went out into the open market to try to lure candidates by the pay scale, which is about equivalent to that which a chief pilot on one of our major airlines receives today. On the contrary, persons whose past training and other technical, mental, and ideological outlook seemed to qualify them for this job were chosen on the basis of these qualifications and willingness to serve, with full knowledge of the dangers. There never was a sought applicant for these positions.

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26

While I know the above does not fully answer all of the questions you raised, I hope you will find it helpful, and I only wish that I could be more responsive but at this time it would not be in the interests of the prisoner nor of national security to do so.

Sincerely,

SIGNED

Allen W. Dulles
Director

TAT O/DCI [redacted] vgd 2 Sep 60

Distribution:

- orig - Addressee via Congressman Durham
- 1 - Congressman Durham
- 1 - DCI
- 1 - ER w/copy of basic
- 1 - Leg. Counsel
- 1 - FMC

~~ER 60~~

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA
CHAPEL HILL

The School of Medicine
Department of Surgery

August 22, 1960

Congressman Carl Durham
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C.

Dear Congressman Durham:

Although it may be that others share the responsibility of the situation in which Francis Powers and the United States now find themselves, following the trials in Moscow concerning the U-2 plane, it still seems to me we should investigate whether or not it is proper, as the newspaper says this morning, for Mr. Powers to continue to receive thirty thousand dollars a year during his imprisonment. The news went on to say that Mr. Powers feared that he would face prosecution on returning to this country, but that our country has assured him that he will not be tried. Is it possible that Mr. Powers had a guilty conscience? Is it not possible that our soft attitude will make it easy for others in our foreign service to defect to the Russians? Is it that important for this country to compete with the Russians along such lines of kindness toward this man? Out of the difficulty, the Russians obtained, relatively undamaged, a plane whose design they had not previously had; and the pilot put out an awful lot of information, which I understand is not necessary under the international code. Does this not make it easier for our fighters to become equally soft and ready to sacrifice their country for their skin at the moment? I am sure we have had greater heroes in the past.

If I am being too rash, then just disregard these ideas; but if you have a moment, I'd like to hear your ideas on the subject, since I am sure you know so much more of the details.

Sincerely yours,

Newton D. Fischer, M. D.

NDF: shw